

## POST-DEPLOYMENT MEMORIAL CEREMONY: A VITAL LINK

BY

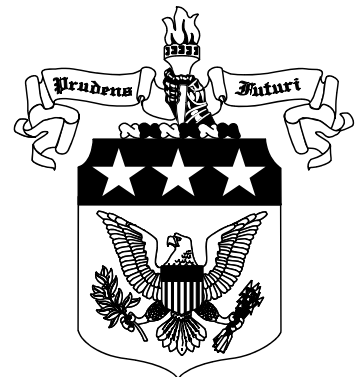
LIEUTENANT COLONEL KENNETH STICE  
United States Army

### DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:

Approved for Public Release.  
Distribution is Unlimited.

USAWC CLASS OF 2008

This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The views expressed in this student academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.



U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE <b>15 MAR 2008</b>		2. REPORT TYPE <b>Strategy Research Project</b>		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2007 to 00-00-2008</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Post-Deployment Memorial Ceremony: A Vital Link</b>			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S) <b>Kenneth Stice</b>			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>U.S. Army War College ,122 Forbes Ave.,Carlisle,PA,17013-5220</b>			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT <b>See attached</b>					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>38</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle State Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

# USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

## **POST-DEPLOYMENT MEMORIAL CEREMONY: A VITAL LINK**

by

Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Stice  
United States Army

Colonel Duncan Baugh  
Project Adviser

This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

The views expressed in this student academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

U.S. Army War College  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013



## **ABSTRACT**

AUTHOR: Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Stice  
TITLE: Post-Deployment Memorial Ceremony: A Vital Link  
FORMAT: Strategy Research Project  
DATE: 25 March 2008      WORD COUNT: 7,459      PAGES: 37  
KEY TERMS: Cohesion, Grief, Survivors, Transformation, Resiliency  
CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The Army continues to transform into a modular expeditionary force during an era of persistent conflict. The Army readiness and force generation model (ARFORGEN) cycles units through predictable stages for availability to deploy. The Army recognizes the stress of frequent deployments on Soldiers. The Army has committed to care for Soldiers and families. Combat casualties are the greatest challenge that Soldiers, families, units and communities face with unit deployments. Connections between Soldiers, families, units, and communities may be maintained through the deployment cycle of units. These connections support unit cohesion and Soldier resiliency. Casualty response operations manage Army care to Soldiers and families. Research indicates that grief is cumulative. Additional research indicates that Soldiers benefit from communal grieving in unit memorial ceremonies. Rear detachment memorial ceremonies bolster connections between Soldiers, families, and community members at home station. Soldiers that do not adequately grieve for each combat casualty run the risk of psychological stress and possible post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Post-deployment memorial ceremonies provide the final link to connect Soldiers, families, units, and communities. Post-deployment memorial ceremonies help Soldiers and

surviving family members to provide support to each other. Post-deployment memorial ceremonies provide for communal grieving, and honor fallen warriors.

## POST-DEPLOYMENT MEMORIAL CEREMONY: A VITAL LINK

This paper will explain the emotional and psychological connections formed between Soldiers, families, units, and the community through the entire deployment cycle. The Army recognizes these connections are vital and has trained leaders and established programs to enhance those bonds between the warrior and those that support him.<sup>1</sup> While these programs seem comprehensive, there is room for improvement. Post-deployment memorial ceremonies build upon the tested foundation of emphasis and concern, manifested in programs that significantly improve both individual and group coping with combat casualties.<sup>2</sup>

Combat casualties are the greatest challenge faced by Soldiers, families, units and communities.<sup>3</sup> This paper will illustrate how the connections formed and maintained at different stages in the deployment cycle are affected by combat casualties. Though the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines must all support warriors and families during casualty operations, this paper will focus on the Army's continuity of care in that mission. Current Army casualty response operations address the obvious issues experienced at the time of a combat death. Yet, I believe that one additional event can take Army compassion to the next level, and in so doing, avoid potential long-term complications that result from the impact of combat casualties on Soldiers, families, units, and communities.

This paper will demonstrate the need for a post-deployment memorial ceremony as the final vital link in this chain of connections between Soldiers, families, units, and communities. Unit post-deployment memorial ceremonies are vital events to facilitate healing, rebuild unit esprit, strengthen connections, and set the conditions to refocus



warriors for future challenges. Current Army redeployment doctrine focuses on the emotional and relationship readjustment tasks related to reunion. While these tasks are significant and constant, they do not adequately address the need to connect the grief responses of those that remained at home station and the warriors returning from the deployed location. Post-deployment memorial ceremonies meet that need in ways that other events cannot.

Army leadership understands and acknowledges the need for strong unit cohesion to accomplish difficult missions.<sup>4</sup> Post-deployment memorial ceremonies play a greater role and have greater significance in a transformed Army at war. This paper will explain that significance in relation to the modular and expeditionary Army, where brigade combat teams (BCT) are the primary units of action.

### Context

There are several factors that contribute to the context of a discussion on unit post-deployment memorial ceremonies. Three main factors will be considered in framing the context of this discussion. First, there is the human factor. Military service connects warriors, families, and communities on several levels. Fundamentally, those connections are human and personal. Those connections are stretched and challenged during times of deployments. The current Army operational tempo (OPTEMPO) is so high that the challenges are recognized as severe by both those inside and outside of the Army. Second, Army transformation has changed the linkage between levels of combat organizations for deployment alignment. These changes have shifted the focus of unit cohesion and connection. Those new parameters and the new paradigm of deployable expeditionary Army brigades directly impacts unit cohesion and therefore,

casualty response operations. Third, pre-deployment actions and events impact both deployment actions and post-deployment events, including a post-deployment memorial ceremony.

### The Human Factor

War is fundamentally a human endeavor. Technology will never eclipse the human aspect of warfare. The Army highlights this aspect in its current Posture Statement, “As U.S. ground forces have demonstrated so vividly since 9-11, the ability to operate in the “human dimension” – to directly confront, to defeat, or to otherwise influence our adversaries – can only be provided by putting “boots on the ground.”<sup>5</sup> Fundamentally, the Army remains an organization that is primarily built with the Soldier at the center with equipment, technology, and weapon systems as elements that support the Soldier. Focus on the Soldier is a key factor in Army culture.

Many competing forces pull at today’s Army and much of the weight of those burdens falls on the shoulders of the courageous Soldiers who serve the Nation at a time of war. The reality of these burdens is apparent to both those inside the Army and those external to its ranks. Senior Army leaders have testified that the Army of 2007 is near a breaking point.<sup>6</sup> Leaders point to several facts to demonstrate just how severe the Army is stressed in today’s environment.

Today’s Army is deployed to support ongoing operations worldwide in numbers that remain high and constant. Currently some 243,000 Soldiers are deployed or forward stationed to perform their duty.<sup>7</sup> Many of these Soldiers are serving in combat zones and qualify for hazardous duty pay while they perform their duties under hostile conditions. Approximately 156,000 Soldiers are deployed in support of Operation Iraqi

Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).<sup>8</sup> The surge of forces to provide stability in Iraq that began in the summer of 2007 had a negative effect of lengthening current unit deployments from twelve months to fifteen months. Army leaders were forced to adjust the length of unit deployments from twelve to fifteen months, to cope with the additional brigades that were shuffled into the deployment cycle early for the surge. The number of deployments and the length of deployments have a direct impact on Soldiers and Families in the Army.

Human Resources Command indicates that 60 percent of the 520,000 Soldiers in the active component have deployed at least one time.<sup>9</sup> The Reserve Component of Army Reserves and Army National Guard are contributing on par with the Active Component for unit deployments to both Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan, and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in Iraq.<sup>10</sup> The end result of the volume and frequency of these deployments is that many communities are affected and touched in personal ways by deployments.

Soldiers who come from all walks of life and whose families reside at military installations and civilian communities across our country, represent both small towns and urban cities. Over half of today's Army is married, and Army families include over 700,000 children, all of whom are affected with each and every deployment of a parent.<sup>11</sup> The human aspect of warfare becomes real and personal for millions of Americans who know and love a Soldier and his Family during times of service and particularly during times of deployment. The three groups: Soldiers, Families, and communities; share common connections that are both strengthened and stretched during times of unit deployments.

America is a nation at war and the Army is bearing the strain of that reality. Army leaders have gone on record in response to that strain with the Army Family Covenant. Mr. Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army, and General George W. Casey, Army Chief of Staff, have expressed that strain in relationship to the stress it inflicts on Army families and the challenges it poses to recruit an all-volunteer force.<sup>12</sup> The Army Family Covenant (AFC)<sup>13</sup> is a clear indication that Army leaders understand the strain on Army families and are responding with a commitment to provide support.

### Army Transformation

The second factor that shapes the context of this discussion on post-deployment memorial ceremonies is Army transformation. The Army began an intentional transformation in 1999 with General Eric Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the Army. That transformation has many aspects to it, but one in particular impacts directly on this discussion. Army transformation has produced a modular and expeditionary force that focuses on brigades as units of action. That new focus has shifted both thinking and organization through a system to produce the output of deployable brigades that are organized, manned, trained, and equipped to conduct operations. The Army is projected to grow through transformation to 76 Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) and approximately 225 Support Brigades.<sup>14</sup>

The new system modeled to manage the transformed Army is the Army Force Generation system (ARFORGEN)<sup>15</sup>. ARFOGEN began in 2005 and manages units on a three-phase cycle. The three phases that units move through are: “Reset and Train Pool; Ready Pool; and Available Pool”. The Active Component units spend one year in each phase. The cycle is lengthened for the Reserve Component units to cover the

cycle in a six-year period. During the final phase the units are available for worldwide deployment. Prior to ARFORGEN and Army transformation, most units trained, deployed, and fought in traditional alignment within Army divisions. Army divisions today must train and deploy, to provide command and control over brigades drawn from diverse locations across the entire force.

Army transformation has changed the traditional linkage between Army divisions and brigades in fundamental ways. Those changes were necessary to meet the goals of Army transformation and to equitably spread the operational burdens across the entire inventory of Army brigades. Prior to transformation, Army divisions were responsible for the brigades organic to their formation, and those responsibilities included an expectation to train, deploy, and fight together.

Army divisions and brigades no longer expect to deploy and fight together. Divisions must prepare to deploy and provide command and control (C2) for several brigades, which may come from various locations. Brigades must prepare, train, and deploy to conduct operations under any designated division headquarters. This new paradigm has given the Army a greater flexibility to alert and deploy both division headquarters and brigades without any restriction to maintain habitual relationships based upon either co-location or unit patch.

The new paradigm of modular expeditionary brigades has provided new challenges as well. It has impacted the connections and relationships between unit organizations and Soldiers, families, and communities. The link between divisions and brigades is weaker than before. The primary level where unit esprit and cohesion is most evident, strongest, and most needed is at the brigade level. Brigades in the

transformed Army contain the right forces with the right capabilities to deploy and fight as a composite whole<sup>16</sup>. The links between the brigade and the battalions of a brigade are strong and habitual. These units work, prepare, train, and deploy together as a composite whole. The end result is an increased measure of esprit and cohesion between Soldiers and families identifying with their brigade – as the team which deploys and fights together.

This shift may not be as obvious to the community, but it is readily recognized by Soldiers and Families when brigade deployments occur without any relationship to a division deployment on the same installation. This central truth: that Soldiers and Families identify with their deploying brigade, matters greatly to the discussion concerning unit post-deployment memorial ceremonies.

#### Pre-Deployment Actions

Pre-deployment actions and events comprise the third factor that shapes the context of this discussion. Pre-deployment actions and events directly impact unit cohesion. These actions and events may strengthen the connections between Soldiers, families, units, and communities. Leaders plan these events with the goal of deepening these connections, because they understand how vital those connections are when the brigade and its battalions are deployed. The Army has institutionalized these efforts with a standardized program, the Deployment Cycle Support (DCS).<sup>17</sup>

Deployment Cycle Support ensures that all individuals and units complete the same tasks in preparation for a unit deployment. Units are validated and certified through several training evaluations. A systematic program ensures Soldiers accomplish a host of actions in preparation for a deployment. Soldiers receive the

necessary immunizations, medical screenings, legal briefings, and personnel actions to prepare for a deployment. Families receive training and briefings which unite them through unit Family Readiness Groups (FRG), as the primary system to provide support during unit deployments. Communities rally support and demonstrate concern through unofficial but intentional programs that reach out to both Soldiers and Families alike.<sup>18</sup>

Installations provide oversight and guide the units, Soldiers, Families, and community through a transition phase that shifts expectations from the deploying unit to the rear detachment. The rear detachment assumes responsibility for Families and home station tasks so that the deploying unit may focus solely on its deployment and mission.

The unit deployment ceremony is the culminating event that signifies the transfer of focus and responsibility from the deploying unit to the rear detachment. It provides leaders, units, Soldiers, Families, and communities a common opportunity to gather and exchange words of commitment during a ceremony that honors the resolve of Soldiers to perform their duty in response to the Nation's call. The 'casing of the colors' is the most significant action of the deployment ceremony and sets the stage for a pending unit deployment, soon after the ceremony.<sup>19</sup> Units march in formation before the reviewing stand and the audience, signifying their steady march to war. The finality of the ceremony is palpable and the reality of separation from family and home is poignant. Units that strengthen the connections between Rear Detachment, FRG, and community during the DCS phase lay a solid foundation to weather the storms of impending deployment challenges.

Chaplains play a key role and perform a vital function in strengthening those connections between the unit, Rear Detachment, FRG, and the community during the pre-deployment DCS. Many brigades are taking full advantage of the Army's Strong Bonds program to equip both single and married Soldiers for relationship challenges – whether deployed or at home station.<sup>20</sup> Many commanders and chaplains have planned and integrated Strong Bonds events as vital components to their pre-deployment program. The predictability of the ARFORGEN model supports an intentional plan to utilize Strong Bonds events as incremental programs that build toward individual, couple, and unit coping and cohesion. These events are voluntary, and do not reach every Soldier or family, but the ones who participate are better equipped to survive a unit deployment, and provide support to others during times of challenge and crisis.

Installation chaplains have organized and led community events that strengthen the bonds between Soldiers, Families, and the community. Installation prayer breakfasts link all three groups through a mutual celebration of religious freedom. Some communities have sustained those common bonds with routine meetings for prayer and fellowship during the unit's deployment.<sup>21</sup> Rear Detachment leaders provide leadership and resources to maintain the connections between the FRG and community during the unit's deployment.

The typical Army unit deploys for twelve months. Since the surge of 2007, those deployments have been increased to fifteen months. Many challenges arise during a unit's deployment, and many spouses and families require significant support to overcome those challenges. Strong connections between the Rear Detachment, FRG,



and the community enable leaders to identify and focus the right support to solve these challenges.

Soldiers, families, units, and communities are faced with the reality of combat casualties. In an era of persistent conflict this reality will remain constant. The human dimension of war will remain central. The Army's transformation into a modular expeditionary force will pose many new challenges. Unit pre-deployment actions can be most helpful in establishing healthy and strong connections to support Soldiers, families, and communities through the difficult challenge of responding to combat casualties.

#### Grief and Casualty Response Operations

Both individuals and groups respond to casualties along similar lines. Those responses always include grief. Grief has been analyzed and doctrinally described in terms of a common cycle with predictable and identifiable stages. The stages of the grief cycle include: shock, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, testing, and acceptance.<sup>22</sup> Knowing the stages of grief helps leaders understand the cycle that their Soldiers progress through when a combat casualty occurs. Leaders that understand the grief cycle can view Soldier responses as normal and reflective of a healthy emotional response to losing a buddy. Chaplains and mental health professionals work with Soldiers and units to facilitate healthy responses to combat casualties through both individual counseling and collective events.

Casualty response operations are conducted during the deployment by every unit. A combat casualty is considered the ultimate sacrifice and pinnacle contribution by a warrior in service to the Nation. Soldiers, families, units, and communities are all

affected by combat casualties. Properly performed casualty response operations deepen healthy connections between the Army, Soldiers, and the surviving family members by tangibly demonstrating support to those who grieve the loss of a warrior. These official actions have the power to demonstrate the values expressed in the “Army Strong” campaign of promises.

Casualty response operations encompass all of the actions that the Army and individual units take after the death of a Soldier. Casualty response operations include the concurrent official actions taking place from the time the casualty occurred to the completion of all required activities.<sup>23</sup> Some of these actions occur at the deployed unit location, others at the home station. All of these actions require individuals to expend emotional energy through their involvement in accomplishing these special tasks. These tasks may also provide an outlet for individuals to do something constructive that helps them to release some of their emotional energy through healthy grief.

The Army carefully manages these actions to ensure that extreme care is taken and utmost concern is tangibly provided through the support given to the surviving family. Beginning with an official notification and continuing beyond the funeral, the Army ensures that families are supported through every challenging decision and adjustment to cope in their time of grief and recovery. The Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO) is the primary individual to see this mission through to completion. Unit rear detachment members, the Family Readiness Group (FRG), and local community also provide significant support to grieving families. All of these actions reinforce the connections made during pre-deployment events.

The unit Rear Detachment will plan and conduct a memorial ceremony<sup>24</sup> to honor a fallen warrior and focus the community and installation's tribute for a Soldier's service. These memorial ceremonies serve to unite the concern and mutual support of those at home station. Memorial ceremonies are primarily for other Soldiers and the unit. Units and Soldiers must honor their fallen and these ceremonies provide the opportunity for them to do so, and begin their individual and collective healing.

Surviving family members are invited but may not attend these ceremonies – depending on their travel plans for a funeral and final burial of their loved ones. Some surviving spouses have shared the benefit of attending the rear detachment memorial ceremony as a connection with their warrior's world and the sense of reassurance that comes with “normalcy” of being in the military culture.<sup>25</sup> They comment on the comfort they received in the military traditions and honors rendered at the ceremony or funeral – as tangible expressions of what their warrior's life was about and stood for. These widows also described how complex military grief can be, with conflicting emotions of pride and anger – some directed at the warrior and others directed at the military Service.<sup>26</sup>

The Rear Detachment maintains contact with the CAO to monitor the support provided to the surviving family and also to determine if additional support may be required to provide assistance. This link between the unit and the surviving family member is vital to demonstrate the commitment and the bonds between the Army, Soldiers, and Families. This link is also critical to facilitate post-deployment contact between surviving family members and returning unit members. When unit Rear Detachments, installations, and casualty assistance officers all work together to support

surviving family members – healthy connections are developed and maintained for future contact between deployed unit members and surviving family members.

Deployed units also perform casualty response operations at their locations. These actions focus unit members' energies to both honor a fallen comrade through appropriate grief events, and refocus on the mission that remains. Unit leaders have many resources available to help their Soldiers emotionally cope with the horrors of combat action and the reality of losing a comrade. Army medical personnel, chaplains and mental health professionals (normally psychologists or psychiatrists) deploy with units and are ready to respond to casualties.

Researchers have explained both the connection between combat losses and unit morale<sup>27</sup> and the toll that killing takes on the individual Soldier.<sup>28</sup> Much of the research is focused on the internal wrestling that occurs in the minds of warriors who experience combat. These findings indicate that internal battles rage over the guilt of killing and destroying, as well as surviving.<sup>29</sup> Others, like Dave Grossman have focused on the training that helps to desensitize Soldiers from the natural abhorrence that makes taking another human's life, even in combat.<sup>30</sup> These findings describe the human dimension of the grief response of warriors.

Much of the earlier research focused on the impact of combat losses in reference to World War II and the Vietnam War. Whereas, the studies on World War II contain both positive and negative findings, the studies of units and Soldiers in Vietnam mostly highlight the negative consequences of casualties on individuals. The two major decisions that affected individual and group responses to grief in Vietnam were: the

draft and the decision to deploy Soldiers on individual rotations. Both of these decisions and the cascading actions that followed worked against unit cohesion.

Jonathan Shay has studied in detail the negative effects of these two factors in Vietnam, the draft and individual rotations. He believed so strongly in the value of unit cohesion as a measure to build resiliency and avoid post traumatic stress syndrome that he made this recommendation to the Army in the introduction of his recent book on the subject: "The leading preventive psychiatry recommendation is to keep people together through training, into a fight, and home again."<sup>31</sup> Shay and others explain the negative consequences for individuals that are thrust into immediate danger and suffer exposure and trauma from combat without the bonds of cohesion or unit esprit. Individual rotations prevented Soldiers from knowing each other and bonding with each other before experiencing combat. As previously stated in this paper, the Army has recognized the importance of unit cohesion, as stated in its Posture Statement.

The lack of cohesion may have contributed to another oversight, the haphazard approach with which leaders provided opportunity for Soldiers to honor their fallen comrades in the field. Tom Neven, speaking of that error in the Vietnam experience said, "A tragic mistake the military made in Vietnam was not formalizing opportunities for soldiers to mourn their fallen comrades".<sup>32</sup> Fortunately, these mistakes in Vietnam were identified and corrected. The Army that fought in Desert Shield/Storm was not the Army of our Vietnam War. The Army today is not the Army of Desert Shield/Storm. Neven describes the striking difference between then and now:<sup>33</sup>

Today's military better understands the dynamics of unit cohesion; soldiers rotate into and out of a war zone as units, not as individuals. Men and women who have lived and trained together for months or years naturally make a much better fighting force. The morale and trust factor

also is much higher. Accordingly, a loss can hit soldiers much harder. But that is why it is much more common to see formal memorial services for the fallen, both in the combat zone and upon return to a home base in the States. It gives warriors an opportunity to talk through their grief. It helps them to again feel close to a lost comrade.

Today's Army has corrected previous mistakes and continues to address the emerging needs of Soldiers and units experiencing combat losses. The Army Combat Stress Control teams provide professional psychological support to units at the tactical level during deployments. The Army recognizes current research which indicates "the positive relationship between group cohesion and psychological well-being".<sup>34</sup>

Despite the Army's high level of concern and effective programs, there are some persistent concerns that must be addressed in today's high operational environment with frequent deployments and many casualties as a result of operations during deployments. Combat casualties may have negative effects on both individuals and teams. These negative effects may include: loss of innocence; numbing fear; anger and resentment toward host nation population; and loss of confidence in equipment, leaders, or training.

Leaders may mitigate the negative effects of combat casualties in several ways. Leaders may provide a post-mission talk to help their Soldiers frame the combat experience in terms of the bigger picture and the shared grief experienced by the entire command.<sup>35</sup> These talks provide unit members the opportunity to observe their leaders' reactions to the same losses that have affected them deeply. Leaders must be transparent for their talks to be relevant and effective. When Soldiers in close proximity are deeply affected by combat casualties to the point of unhealthy responses and an inability to perform, leaders may choose to schedule a critical event debriefing (CED) for select audiences.<sup>36</sup> Critical event debriefings are used for small groups of affected

individuals who share the same traumatizing event and need to start the initial stages of the grief process together.

Another effective response to help both individuals and the unit to collectively grieve is the unit memorial ceremony. Deployed units observe a tactical pause to operations for the purpose of conducting a memorial ceremony to honor their fallen comrades. Unit memorial ceremonies provide both individuals and collective groups the opportunity to grieve in private and public ways.

Memorial ceremonies express the heartfelt grief of fellow warriors in the collective expression of respect that honors the fallen comrade through a dignified tribute for the fallen warrior's service and sacrifice. Commanders, unit leaders, and fellow Soldiers share a collective story of common bonds, loyalty, respect, honor, and loss. These poignant testimonials help everyone in attendance to share in a collective service that focuses grief in a positive and healthy manner. The conclusion of the ceremony includes the military honors of firing a volley and the playing of taps.

Memorial ceremonies provide healthy opportunities to celebrate service and sacrifice while mourning the loss of fallen comrades. These events also provide leaders the opportunity to pull together unit members through a shared experience of grief that unites them with a renewed focus and dedication that honors their fallen comrade and teammate. In previous times, notably during Vietnam, it was common that no unit ceremony was provided to help Soldiers grieve together. This was a major omission. Jonathan Shay described the cost of those omissions: "failure to communalize grief can imprison a person in endless swinging between rage and emotional deadness as a

permanent way of being in the world”.<sup>37</sup> Today’s Army understands the importance of unit memorial ceremonies and the vital need for Soldiers to grieve as healthy coping.

Unit memorial ceremonies help bring a moment of closure that helps unit members pay their respects, honor their comrade, and share each others’ burdens. It is a common occurrence to witness individuals helping each other grieve and cope through appropriate expressions of love and brotherhood, in the warrior’s hug, arms around another’s shoulder, and prayers together. Tears flow freely in this environment where the shared sacrifice and commitment of the warrior ethos permits honest expressions of love and grief without any fear of embarrassment or misunderstanding. Often, these emotionally-charged events serve to become a rallying point for a renewed commitment to ‘finish the job’ and honor the memory of those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the giving of their life to perform their duty.

Deployed unit memorial ceremonies may not facilitate all necessary grieving for Soldiers. Survivor guilt and the tactical situation may either preclude or hasten grief responses. Survivor guilt is common among warriors who lose a comrade. Survivor guilt is the emotional guilt experienced when a survivor feels as though they should have died instead of the deceased. These responses are normal and common among warriors who face combat and are on the scene at the time of the casualty. Chaplains may address survivor guilt in their ministry with Soldiers at the time of the memorial ceremony, but for many it may take longer to be able to accept the loss of a dear friend, by whom they measure their own life and identity as a Soldier by.

Although comparisons of worth and worthiness with others are normally inconclusive, they do cause Soldiers to question why they remain, when another is



taken. These feelings of guilt however, may have two healthy benefits. First, they can lead to a deeper appreciation of the fallen comrade. Second, they may lead individuals to new commitments. Glenn Schiraldi makes this point, “Guilt can be adaptive if it is realistic and if it leads to improvements in our behavior or character”.<sup>38</sup> Soldiers who have swapped duty or exchanged places prior to a combat casualty are most at risk for survivor guilt. Others, who feel ashamed at their internal relief to have survived, may also experience survivor guilt when they consider the great sacrifice of their fallen comrade.

Finally, if a Soldier feels as if his actions directly contributed to the casualty, they may experience survivor guilt. This includes warriors who feel they did not do enough or perform bravely to rescue or prevent the casualty from occurring. All of these reasons implore the unit chaplain and Commander to speak directly to the needs of these Soldiers in both public and private forums. A critical event debriefing may also be required to mitigate elements of survivor guilt. All friendly fire incidents require a critical event debriefing and intentional efforts by medical, chaplain, and mental health professionals to help survivors cope with their emotional turmoil.

Survivor guilt may resurface when Soldiers redeploy and return home. It is not uncommon for Soldiers to experience emotional confusion when they celebrate their safe return and reunion with loved ones – but feel guilty in the absence of their fallen comrade. If unacknowledged and ignored, latent survivor guilt may prevent Soldiers from having any contact with surviving family members of their fallen comrade. The chain of connection between grieving individuals is broken when survivor guilt leads Soldiers to avoid contact with surviving family members.

Although deployed units may take a tactical pause to honor their fallen in a memorial ceremony, the respite is brief and temporary. For many Soldiers, and particularly when there are multiple casualties on a semi-frequent basis, they do not feel as if they have sufficiently grieved in the allotted time provided at a memorial ceremony. Research into post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) indicates the cumulative effects trauma on individuals. Unit operations require many Soldiers to refocus and continue with missions, even while they are still mourning their fallen comrade.

Some Soldiers may be unable to attend the unit memorial ceremony due to mission demands and tasks. There will always be those who perform guard duty, communication tasks, and staff functions at headquarters that are unable to break away to attend ceremonies. Others may be away at different locations and forward operating bases (FOB) or even on rest and recovery leave (R&R) away from the combat zone.

Some Soldiers may be unable to relax and reflect in the combat zone, where they perceive the threat in terms of never being completely safe. The post-deployment memorial ceremony provides those unable to attend the deployed unit memorial ceremony an opportunity to join their comrades in tribute to their fallen friend and teammate. Post-deployment memorial ceremonies are conducted in a safe environment where Soldiers can reflect without the heightened state of awareness that is required in the combat zone.

The modern battlefield with superb communication networks permits strong connections between the deployed unit and both the rear detachment and surviving family. Those connections often yield personal comments, stories, and testimonials that may be shared at the unit's memorial ceremony at the deployed location. These verbal

tributes and comments from family members, serve to remind Soldiers that their service is respected and their losses are shared by those at home station. Many times the comforting words of a surviving spouse or parent is sufficient to touch and challenge the unit members toward healthy decisions of commitment.

The flow of communication goes both ways. Unit members may also express their feelings of respect and shared loss with the surviving family through video and written means that are collected and sent to the family. Many times the verbal tributes given at the deployed memorial ceremony may be read and shared at the Rear Detachment memorial ceremony at home station. Always, these heartfelt tributes are available to be provided to the surviving family, even if after the Rear Detachment or family memorial. These connections that communicate between the surviving family and the buddies of a fallen Soldier establish significant bonds. Surviving families receive comfort from those who served alongside their loved one and shared the same sacrifices to perform their military duties at the Nation's call.

Many deployed units are videotaping their memorial ceremonies to provide the family with a permanent tribute for their loved one's service. Many units are also including individual testimonials from friends at the end of these videos, whereby unit members are given opportunity to express their personal gratitude and pride in serving alongside their fallen comrade. These videos and written messages also provide surviving family members with names and faces to recognize at any future meetings with unit members, after they redeploy to home station.

In some cases, the connections established between surviving family members and Soldiers in the deployed unit continue throughout the remaining time of the

deployment. Unit commanders are kept informed and monitor the progress of the CAO in providing support to the surviving family members. Unit chaplains frequently provide updates to Soldiers in the form of soliciting prayers on the behalf of a fallen comrade's family. The exchange of letters and email tributes between Soldiers and surviving family members is not uncommon. These communications provide the family with a relevant sounding board to express their pride in their warrior's service to the Nation.

Likewise, Soldiers who served with and knew their fallen comrade well, are able to express their sincere condolences in the midst of sharing how much their battle buddy mattered in their daily lives. These communications also build surviving family member expectations for future contact and eventual visits from returning Soldiers. The post-deployment memorial ceremony fills that need in a controlled environment that allows that contact in appropriate ways.

Post-deployment memorial ceremonies provide opportunity for communal grieving and link together surviving family members, rear detachment, FRG, unit leaders, and Soldiers. Recent psychological research into combat stress points to the need for post-deployment actions to manage combat stress responses in healthy ways.<sup>39</sup> Similar recent studies indicate that Soldiers who are able to share their experiences in a supportive environment are less likely to have long-lasting trauma which may lead to PTSD.<sup>40</sup> Post-deployment memorial ceremonies are the vital final link that promotes communal grieving, described by Jonathan Shay as being able to share in emotional release and receive in emotional support through rituals, conversations with those trusted to stay beside each other and have shared the same loss.<sup>41</sup>

The Army has recognized and responded to current combat stress and trauma issues. The DCS redeployment process requires every re-deploying Soldier to complete a Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA).<sup>42</sup> The DCS redeployment training and actions for units, Soldiers, and family members also address significant psychological needs related to combat and casualties. The primary training that addresses these areas and helps individuals to develop resiliency is the “Battlemind” training. That training is designed to build Soldier resiliency and unit cohesion, thereby reducing combat stress responses.

Post-deployment DCS classes help Soldiers and family members address the reunion and readjustment issues common to all. Soldiers and spouses are reminded of the psychological impact of combat trauma and casualties. Post-deployment memorial ceremonies complement this excellent training and support that the DCS classes began.

Post-deployment memorial ceremonies are vital to allow individuals to process their grief and reduce their vulnerability to combat stress responses or PTSD. One study compared the grieving differences between Israeli Soldiers, Holocaust survivors, and Vietnam veterans identified the role that memorial ceremonies and memorial monuments play in helping individuals to cope and readjust.<sup>43</sup> In that study, Zahava Solomon explained that when Holocaust survivors and Vietnam veterans were denied the opportunity to grieve at the right time, both suffered from a vulnerability to future stressors that trigger combat stress responses.<sup>44</sup> The Israeli defense forces are not only permitted to attend the unit memorial service, but also afforded the opportunity to take leave to attend funerals or make condolence visits to surviving families.<sup>45</sup> Post-

deployment memorial ceremonies provide the same opportunities for U.S. Army Soldiers to express their condolences in person, when previous conditions and distance did not permit personnel from departing the deployed location.

Finally, post-deployment memorial ceremonies mark the connection between the community, Soldiers and families. Units and installations work to maintain mutually supportive relationships with the surrounding community year-round. Communities focus that support in tangible ways during a unit deployment. Civic leaders and concerned neighbors attend pre-deployment functions and support Soldiers and families during the long months of separation.

Many may attend the rear detachment memorial ceremonies at the time of the Soldier's death. Many will also attend the post-deployment ceremony as a celebration of the unit's return and a job well done. Post-deployment memorial ceremonies provide the community with another opportunity to both feel included and also to show their support for those most affected by casualties. The installation chaplain at Fort Hood, Texas described the value of these ceremonies and the connections they foster.<sup>46</sup> This chaplain observed over one thousand attendees at a division post-deployment memorial ceremony. For many of the surviving family members that attended, it was the first time that they had met any Soldier or unit member from their fallen loved one's unit. He described the need for these events in terms of the ongoing challenges that Soldiers face: "If the divisions and BCTs don't unpack their grief as they go, and let out these emotions, it will be too much to carry indefinitely. There's got to be closure a little at a time, because the deployments keep coming."<sup>47</sup>

Zafava Solomon commented on the power of local and national recognition and mourning through religious observances (memorial ceremonies):<sup>48</sup>

These observances are usually carried out even by people who do not follow other religious regulations, and the army actively encourages soldiers to participate in the rites for fellow veterans as well as close friends and family. In this way, the bereaved soldier, like the bereaved family, is given a set and accepted way of expressing his personal grief in the company of others who share his sorrows.

Veterans comprise a significant and loyal group within the community. Veterans of both recent and previous conflicts understand the grief of today's Soldiers and families. Veterans also honor the traditions that remind them of their own fallen comrades.

Establishing permanent memorials allows Soldiers, families, and the community to honor casualties privately and at times of their own choosing. Units inscribe the names of their casualties at the post-deployment memorial ceremony to honor their fallen, and in so doing, link them with past warriors who have also paid the full price of our freedom. Soldiers and families derive comfort in the visible expression of grief, honor, and remembrance. The inclusion of recent casualties reminds all who participate in the post-deployment ceremony how many others have gone before, and how wide the boundaries of the Army family extend through history. Soldiers, families, and community members who would otherwise be unable to visit all of the hometowns of casualties, are able to honor them at one spot, without any overlooked or neglected.

### Challenges

Post-deployment memorial ceremonies require preparation and planning to be successful. Units in the current deployment cycle with ARFORGEN and DCS face unique challenges in conducting a post-deployment memorial ceremony. One challenge is in the area of timing. Most units have weathered the expeditionary cycle, to

include at least a one-year deployment, and return home with about 80% of the leadership due to rotate to another permanent assignment. Many of the officers will transition soon after the DCS reunion phase is complete. It is not uncommon to witness multiple change-of-command and change-of-responsibility<sup>49</sup> ceremonies for most of the units. The end result of these transitions and transfers of leadership means that the team which deployed and endured the combat losses will be broken up, with personnel of all ranks departing for new assignments. The cohesion and esprit that was solidified during the deployed memorial services and courageous leadership after combat losses will be stretched and replaced by new energy and a new focus to look toward the next mission and cycle. So in terms of practical timing, it is essential to plan for the post-deployment memorial ceremony to be conducted prior to a majority of these changes to personnel. Commanders and chaplains must plan prior to the re-deployment for these ceremonies to be placed on the unit calendar with sufficient prioritization to ensure they will not be an afterthought.

Another challenge concerns the logistical support required to conduct the post-deployment memorial ceremony. Since the bulk of the detailed planning will occur prior to re-deployment, the rear detachment will need to understand and support the unit Commander's intent. That intent must be clear in its guidance to shape the ceremony preparation in terms of what it should accomplish. The inclusion of the rear detachment, FRGs, family members, surviving family members of fallen comrades, and the community is essential. The invitation list must be managed well to ensure that all who may benefit from the opportunity to collectively grieve, establish connections, and solidify closure – are given an invitation to attend. Therefore, the rear detachment



must maintain accurate information on how to reach surviving family members to extend the invitation.<sup>50</sup> Rear detachment personnel must also maintain personnel records that will facilitate accurate biographical sketches for all casualties for the post-deployment memorial ceremony. Reservations of either the parade field or installation chapel, and the de-confliction of other resources are likewise important. Contractual preparation for engraving or monuments is required to support any memorialization effort, to include a thorough legal review that secures authorization to re-name facilities, parks, or streets. Permanent memorials help individuals with closure to their grieving and provide a “touch stone” for future visits on anniversary occasions or Memorial Day to honor their loved one or comrade.

There may be emotional challenges related to conducting a post-deployment memorial ceremony. Rear detachment chaplains may brief the home station community and FRG leaders on the purpose and benefits of a post-deployment ceremony. Chaplains may avert unnecessary confusion with explanations that help the home station leaders to understand the “how” and “why” for the ceremony. Some may attempt to minimize the need for these ceremonies, or seek to combine them with the post-deployment ceremony, which officially signifies the unit’s return with the uncasing of the colors. But combining the two ceremonies would be a mistake. The post-deployment ceremony is rightfully geared toward a celebration of a mission accomplished, while the memorial ceremony is to honor and remember the great sacrifice given to accomplish the mission. The two ceremonies are distinct in purpose and accomplish different purposes, and therefore must remain separate.

## Future Research

The scope of this paper does not allow discussion of several additional related topics. A thorough analysis of how Joint organizations handle casualty response operations and what programs might be shared between the Armed Services is needed. The volume of civilian contractors on the battlefield performing duties in the combat zone requires study to assess the adjustments to current Army doctrine and procedures for casualty response operations. The number of casualties from OEF and OIF has led many senior leaders across the Department of Defense to speak openly about the need to “keep faith” with surviving families, and a re-examination of entitlements, benefits, and levels of support may be in order. Finally, the role that auxiliary community organizations play in providing support during casualty response operations is needed. These are just some of the pertinent areas that further study may yield relevant knowledge and therefore helpful guidance.

## Conclusion

This paper has sought to provide a thorough discussion of post-deployment memorial ceremonies as the final vital link between Soldiers, families, and community in response to casualties. Many of the challenges may be overcome with planning conducted throughout the DCS cycle of a unit deployment. Current Army programs provide excellent support to deployed Soldiers and families at home station in ways that fulfill the Army STRONG campaign and the Army Family Covenant.

Commanders already have professional support through medical providers, chaplains, and mental health staff to advise and lead the unit casualty response operations. The value of communal grieving is backed by research into the mistakes of

the Vietnam experiences, many of which contributed to a high incidence of post-traumatic stress syndrome. The Army continues to explore better methods to identify, assess, treat, and support Soldiers through combat stress responses. Army chaplains provide key programs that build resiliency in Soldiers before, during, and after deployments. Post-deployment memorial ceremonies are the final vital link in a chain of connections between Soldiers, families, units, and communities. Post-deployment memorial ceremonies are vital events to facilitate healing, rebuild unit esprit, strengthen connections, and set the conditions to refocus warriors for future challenges.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Throughout the paper the author will refer to Soldiers and warriors with the male pronoun “him/he” without any favoritism or prejudice related to gender. There is certainly no attempt to disparage female service members that perform their duties in service to the Nation.

<sup>2</sup> Combat “casualties” may be used to refer to both those individuals who are injured and survive with medical treatment, as well as those that are killed. For the purpose of this paper, the term “casualties” will primarily refer to those that die, unless explained differently in the context of the sentence.

<sup>3</sup> Whereas this paper will address the emotional and psychological responses to combat deaths as casualties, the author recognizes the tremendous challenges and current Army responses to support Soldiers, families, and communities in the case of wounded warriors. The author does not intend to pit these two separate challenges in juxtaposition as competing needs. Both types of casualties require the Army’s steadfast resolve to continue to improve its institutional responses and provide relevant support that addresses the plethora of needs for all survivors.

<sup>4</sup> Francis J. Harvey and Peter J. Schoomaker, *A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities: A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2007*, Posture statement presented to the 110<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 2007), i. “Whole Cohesive Units” is one of the four key ideas which guide the Army’s transformation.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Bryan Bender, “Army Is Warn Too Thin,” *Boston Globe*, 27 September 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from [http://www.boston.com/new/nation/washington/articles/2007/09/27/army\\_is\\_worn\\_too\\_thin\\_says\\_general/](http://www.boston.com/new/nation/washington/articles/2007/09/27/army_is_worn_too_thin_says_general/) ; Internet; accessed 31 December 2007. Both Mr. Peter Geren, Secretary of the Army, and General George Casey, Army Chief of Staff, testified before the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee on September 27, 2007. General

Casey stated that the Army is “out of balance” and that “the current demand of our forces exceeds the sustainable supply. We are consumed with meeting the demands of the current fight and are unable to provide ready forces as rapidly as necessary for other potential contingencies.”

<sup>7</sup> Francis J. Harvey and Peter J. Schoomaker, *A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities: A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2007*, Posture statement presented to the 110<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 2007), pg 8.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., This figure is derived from the totals published as of January 30, 2007 (136,000) and the additional 20,000 deployed in support of the surge operations to Iraq in the summer of 2007.

<sup>9</sup> Jim Tice, “The Year Ahead,” *Springfield (VA) Army Times*, 7 January 2008. p.10.

<sup>10</sup> Francis J. Harvey and Peter J. Schoomaker, *A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities: A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2007*, Posture statement presented to the 110<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 2007), 8. The Army Posture statement for 2007 indicates 46,000 National Guard Soldiers and 28,000 Army Reserve Soldiers were mobilized and activated at the time of publication.

<sup>11</sup> Patricia Radcliffe, “Army Officials Renew Vows With Soldiers, Families,” 6 December 2007, linked from *The United States Army Home Page* at “Army Family Strong,” available from <http://www.army.mil/-news/2007/12/06/6475-army-officials-renew-vows-with-soldiers-families/> ; Internet; accessed 30 December 2007. Mr. Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army, cited these demographics in his remarks at Fort Monroe, Virginia on the occasion of the signing of the Army Family Covenant ceremony, November 29, 2007. His remarks indicated that Army leaders know and understand the impact of these statistics. His remarks also communicated the Army’s commitment to provide creative support programs to help during these stressful times of deployments.

<sup>12</sup> Elizabeth M. Lorge, “Army Leaders Sign Covenant With Families,” 17 October 2007, linked from the United States Army Home Page at “news,” available from [http://www.armyfrg.org/skins/frg/display.aspx?CategoryID=18fb51a8-1bc4-40e2-a9cf-0824310e24d9&ObjectID=0cf2f1ec-a7ea-4dc2-80e9-b542601e00b2&Action=display\\_user\\_object&Mode=user&ModuleID=f6c229ca-03ae-4c81-8d0a-81a5a0c208f9](http://www.armyfrg.org/skins/frg/display.aspx?CategoryID=18fb51a8-1bc4-40e2-a9cf-0824310e24d9&ObjectID=0cf2f1ec-a7ea-4dc2-80e9-b542601e00b2&Action=display_user_object&Mode=user&ModuleID=f6c229ca-03ae-4c81-8d0a-81a5a0c208f9). Both Mr. Geren and General Casey made remarks at the signing of the Army Family Covenant at Fort Knox, Kentucky on October 17, 2007. Mr. Geren linked the health of the all-volunteer Army with the health of the Army family, and emphasized that Army leadership understands that significant relationship.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., The Army Family Covenant represents a \$1.4 billion dollar budget commitment in 2008 to fund programs that support Army Families with additional housing, physical and mental healthcare, childcare, and education benefits. The Army Family Covenant codifies the commitment of Army leaders to increase levels of support to Soldiers, spouses, and children in the Army.

<sup>14</sup> Francis J. Harvey and Peter J. Schoomaker, *A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities: A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2007*, Posture

statement presented to the 110<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 2007), 10.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Addendum H, “Army Force Generation”.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., “ARFORGEN is not just about preparing units for worldwide deployments. It affects both the Operating Force and the Generating Force. It changes the way that the Army will resource, recruit, organize, train, educate, equip, source, mobilize, deploy and sustain whole, cohesive units on a recurring basis. The goal is to generate combat power on a sustained cyclic basis more effectively and efficiently.”

<sup>17</sup> “Deployment Cycle Support,” linked from the *Army G1 Home Page* at “FAQ,” available from <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/dcs/faq.asp>; Internet; accessed 30 December 2007. “Deployment Cycle Support (DCS) is a comprehensive process that ensures Soldiers, DA civilians and their families are better prepared and sustained throughout the deployment cycle. It provides a means to identify Soldiers, DA civilians, and families who may need assistance with the challenges inherent to extended deployments.”

<sup>18</sup> Patriotic community organizations such as United Service Organization (USO), local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), American Legion, and local Chamber of Commerce provide many means of support to demonstrate their concern for Soldiers and families. Examples of these types of support include: send-off dinners where Soldiers and families are the guests of honor and deployment care packages.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Drill and Ceremony*, Army Field Manual No. 3-21.5, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 7 July 2003), Section 15-6. This section covers the “casing of the colors” during official ceremonies. Units case the colors during a deployment ceremony to signify the unit’s departure for a deployment. In reverse order, the colors are uncased at the redeployment ceremony to signify the unit’s return from a deployment.

<sup>20</sup> *The Strong Bonds Home Page*, available from <http://www.strongbonds.org/skins/strongbonds/display.aspx>; Internet; accessed 30 December 2007. “Strong Bonds has specialized programs for single Soldiers, couples and families. Those Soldiers being deployed or redeployed can also learn special coping tactics. Strong Bonds empowers Soldiers and their loved ones with relationship-building skills, and connects them to community health and support resources. It is a holistic, preventative program committed to the restoration and preservation of Army families, even those near crisis. The program is initiated and led by the Army Chaplains. More than 90% of those who have attended the program rate it positively.”

<sup>21</sup> Schofield Barracks chapel and community hosted several events during the deployment of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division headquarters, and the Hawaii-based brigades: the 25<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB), the 3-25 Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), and the 45<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade. Weekly “Deployment Survival Nights” were conducted for spouses and FRGs to participate. Weekly prayer meetings invited the local community and clergy to join chaplains and Army family members to pray for those deployed. Quarterly events were conducted by the Rear Detachment to inform local community leaders and clergy.

<sup>22</sup> Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, “The Grief Cycle”, available from [http://changingminds.org/disciplines/change\\_management/kubler\\_ross/kubler\\_ross.htm](http://changingminds.org/disciplines/change_management/kubler_ross/kubler_ross.htm); Internet; accessed 28 December 2007. These standard stages were developed from the research of Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and

universally accepted as an effective model to study and respond to grief. Kubler-Ross as a medical doctor in Switzerland conducted her seminal research on dying patients and published her findings in a book, *On Death and Dying* in 1969.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Casualty Program*, Army Regulation 600-8-1, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 30 April 2007). AR 600-8-1 provides the regulatory guidance and procedures for casualty response operations.

<sup>24</sup> Unit Commanders decide whether to conduct a Memorial Ceremony which is primarily patriotic in nature with limited religious content, or to conduct a Memorial Service which is primarily religious in nature. Both events contain military honors and typically those in attendance do not know that there is a technical difference between the two. For the purpose of this research paper the term memorial “ceremony” will be used as representative for either type of event that is conducted to facilitate the honoring of fallen comrades in a public ceremony or service.

<sup>25</sup> Joanne M. Steen and M. Regina Asaro, *Military Widow: A Survival Guide* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, .2006), 31-35.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>27</sup> Chaplain(LTC)Michael R. Durham, *The Grief Impact on Soldier Morale During Extended Deployments*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 15 April 1996).

<sup>28</sup> J. Glenn Gray, *The Warriors: Reflections On Men in Battle* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press,1959). In chapter four, Gray provides a good explanation of the Soldier's emotional coping with combat, death, and hardship. His descriptions of the stimuli and responses that allow Soldiers to continue to perform, despite the horrific images, experiences, and expectations are helpful.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 161-173.

<sup>30</sup> Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995). Grossman's seminal work resonated like a shockwave across the Army and caused many to reconsider the consequences of modern training methods that desensitize warriors from an aversion to kill another human being. He followed with his second major work, *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and in Peace* (U.S.: PPCT Research Publications, 2004). Both volumes provide a look into the interacting dynamics between external stimuli and internal convictions, as that interaction relates to combat and killing.

<sup>31</sup> Jonathan Shay, *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming* (New York: Scribner, 2002), 5.

<sup>32</sup> Tom Neven, *On the Frontline: A Personal Guidebook for the Physical, Emotional, and Spiritual Challenges of Military Life* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 2006), 180.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 180-181.

<sup>34</sup> Steve J. Lewis, "Combat Stress Control: Putting Principle Into Practice," in *Military Life: The Psychology of Serving in Peace and Combat*, ed. Thomas W. Britt, Carl A. Castro, and Amy B. Adler, eds., vol. 2, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 2006). 129.

<sup>35</sup> Pete Kilner, "Leading Our Soldiers After They Lose One Of Their Own," *Army* 58, no. 1 (January 2008): 47. Junior Army leaders described their actions with recommendations for others to follow in this installment of "Company Command: Building Combat-Ready Teams", a monthly section dedicated to pass along real solutions to real challenges.

<sup>36</sup> Critical Event Debriefings (CED) are group counseling interventions, whereby trained professionals follow a psychological protocol to help victims of trauma process their experience collectively and develop individual coping skills. They are an abbreviated format from the thorough Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD), adopted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the standard for debriefings. CISD was developed by Jeffrey T. Mitchell and George S. Everly, a team of psychologists who pioneered the approach and published their work. Jeffrey T. Mitchell and George S. Everly, *Critical Incident Stress Debriefing: An operations manual for the prevention of traumatic stress among emergency services and disaster workers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Ellicott City, Md.: Chevron Publishing Company, 1996).

<sup>37</sup> Jonathan Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character* (New York: Atheneum, 1994), 40.

<sup>38</sup> Glenn R. Schiraldi, *The Post – Traumatic Stress Disorder Sourcebook* (Los Angeles: Lowell House, 2000), 27.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas W. Britt, Carl A. Castro, and Amy B. Adler, eds., *Military Life: The Psychology of Serving in Peace and Combat*, vol. 2 "Operational Stress". (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International, Connecticut, 2006), 134-135. Steve J. Lewis discusses "Combat Stress Control: Putting Principle Into Practice" in chapter six.

<sup>40</sup> Shira Maguen, "Predictors and Prevalence of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Among Military Veterans" in *Military Life: The Psychology of Serving in Peace and Combat*, ed. Thomas W. Britt, Carl A. Castro, and Amy B. Adler, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 2006), 161.

<sup>41</sup> Jonathan Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character* (New York: Atheneum, 1994), 55.

<sup>42</sup> Since March 2005, Soldiers complete DD Form 2900 within 180days of re-deployment in accordance with a program mandated by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs: the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) Program. While all areas of health are covered in the survey, the emphasis is on identifying mental health issues that require support and treatment.

<sup>43</sup> Zafava Solomon, *Combat Stress Reaction: The Enduring Toll of War* (New York: Plenum Press, 1993).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

<sup>46</sup> Chester Egert, email message to author, 13 January 2008. Chaplain (Colonel) Egert provided his observations from the experiences at Fort Hood, Texas. According to him, as of November 2007 Fort Hood had suffered 611 killed-in-action deaths from units deployed in support of OEF and OIF.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>49</sup> Change-of-responsibility ceremonies are those events which signify the transfer of authority for the senior enlisted leadership of a unit, in the case of a new Command Sergeant Major or unit First Sergeant.

<sup>50</sup> Maintaining contact between surviving family members after the funeral is challenging. Many re-locate and change their phone numbers. The CAO and rear detachment must prioritize their efforts to ensure contact with surviving family members is maintained.



